

# FAITH AND REASON

**The Heart of Christ! His "Sacred Heart" has given men everything: redemption, salvation, sanctification.** St Faustina Kowalska saw coming from this Heart that was overflowing with generous love, two rays of light which illuminated the world. "The two rays", according to what Jesus himself told her, "represent the blood and the water". The blood recalls the sacrifice of Golgotha and the mystery of the Eucharist; the water, according to the rich symbolism of the Evangelist John, makes us think of Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Through the mystery of this wounded heart, the restorative tide of God's merciful love continues to spread over the men and women of our time. Here alone can those who long for true and lasting happiness find its secret.

"Jesus, I trust in you". This prayer, dear to so many of the devout, clearly expresses the attitude with which we too would like to abandon ourselves trustfully in your hands, O Lord, our only Savior. You are burning with the desire to be loved and those in tune with the sentiments of your heart learn how to build the new civilization of love. A simple act of abandonment is enough to overcome the barriers of darkness and sorrow, of doubt and desperation. The rays of your divine mercy restore hope, in a special way, to those who feel overwhelmed by the burden of sin.

Mary, Mother of Mercy, help us always to have this trust in your Son, our Redeemer. Help us too, St Faustina, whom we remember today with special affection. Fixing our weak gaze on the divine Savior's face, we would like to repeat with you: "Jesus, I trust in you". Now and forever. **Amen... excerpt from a homily of St. John Paul II**

**Mary united herself to Jesus' Offering: Regina caeli laetare, alleluia!** So the Church sings in this Easter season, inviting the faithful to join in the spiritual joy of Mary, Mother of the Redeemer. The Blessed Virgin's gladness at Christ's Resurrection is even greater if one considers her intimate participation in Jesus' entire life. In accepting with complete availability, the words of the Angel Gabriel, who announced to her that she would become the Mother of the Messiah, Mary began her participation in the drama of Redemption. Her involvement in her Son's sacrifice, revealed by Simeon during the presentation in the Temple, continues not only in the episode of the losing and finding of the 12-year-old Jesus, but also throughout his public life. However, the Blessed Virgin's association with Christ's mission reaches its culmination in Jerusalem, at the time of the Redeemer's Passion and Death. As the Fourth Gospel testifies, she was in the Holy City at the time, probably for the celebration of the Jewish feast of Passover.

The Council stresses the profound dimension of the Blessed Virgin's presence on Calvary, recalling that she "faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the Cross", and points out that this union "in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to his death". With our gaze illumined by the radiance of the Resurrection, we pause to reflect on the Mother's involvement in her Son's redeeming Passion, which was completed by her sharing in his suffering. Let us return again, but now in the perspective of the Resurrection, to the foot of the Cross where the Mother endured "with her only-begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, associated herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consented to the immolation of this victim which was born of her". With these words, the Council reminds us of "Mary's compassion"; in her heart reverberates all that Jesus suffers in body and soul, emphasizing her willingness to share in her Son's redeeming sacrifice and to join her own maternal suffering to his priestly offering. The Council text also stresses that her consent to Jesus' immolation is not passive acceptance but a genuine act of love, by which she offers her Son as a "victim" of expiation for the sins of all humanity. Lastly, *Lumen gentium* relates the Blessed Virgin to Christ, who has the lead role in Redemption, making it clear that in associating herself "with his sacrifice" she remains subordinate to her divine Son.

In the Fourth Gospel, St John says that "standing by the Cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene". By using the verb "to stand", which literally means "to be on one's feet", "to stand erect", perhaps the Evangelist intends to present the dignity and strength shown in their sorrow by Mary and the other women. The Blessed Virgin's "standing erect" at the foot of the Cross recalls her unfailing constancy and extraordinary courage in facing suffering. In the tragic events of Calvary, Mary is sustained by faith, strengthened during the events of her life and especially during Jesus' public life. The Council recalls that "the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the Cross". Sharing his deepest feelings, she counters the arrogant insults addressed to the crucified Messiah with forbearance and pardon, associating herself with his prayer to the Father: "Forgive them, for they know not what they do". By sharing in the feeling of abandonment to the Father's will expressed in Jesus' last words on the Cross: "Father into your hands I commend my spirit!", she thus offers, as the Council notes, loving consent "to the immolation of this victim which was born of her".

Mary's supreme "yes" is radiant with trusting hope in the mysterious future, begun with the death of her crucified Son. The words in which Jesus taught the disciples on his way to Jerusalem "that the Son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" re-echo in her heart at the dramatic hour of Calvary, awakening expectation of and yearning for the Resurrection... **St. John Paul II, General Audience**

### **Christ 's Matchless Love:**

Love the Revealer - are you prepared for that? For seeing of what God truly is and of what you are?

Love the Purifier - and how shall this be without pain?

Love the Illuminator - can you bear the light?

Love All-demanding - are you willing to be an abandoned lover?

Love the Forgiver - but have you forgiven?

Love the Perfecter - but many a blow and biting sculpture polished well those stones elect?

Love the Peace-Bringer - but who brings a sword, for peace may reign only when the war with self within and evil without has been fought and won... **Fr Bede Frost**

**To Give of Self:** I wonder is that why some of us are so frightened of Holy Communion, because we still cling to the world of sense. It is certain that Catholics are most apt to neglect Communion, just when they most need it, in the springtime of life, when the blood is hot, and the passions strong, and ambitions dominate us. Why is that, unless we are more wedded, when we are young, to the desires that perish?

It is perhaps because, all the time, we are shrinking from the act of confidence which would throw the whole burden of our lives on Our Lord; do not want Holy Communion to have its proper effect in us, which is to make the joys and distractions have less meaning and less appeal for us? We must not expect Him to work the marvels of grace in us, if we oppose its actions with the stubbornness of our own wills, still clinging to the self and to the sense..... **Msgr Ronald Knox**

### **A Thought For the Day**

**Sunday** Your holy will is the life of my soul.

**Monday** All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.

**Tuesday** The things that come to a man who waits are seldom the things he waited for.

**Wednesday** The first test of a truly great man is his humility.

**Thursday** It is a great thing to know how to make use of the present moment.

**Friday** A noble deed is a step toward God. Good deeds ring clear through heaven like a bell.

**Saturday** Love endures everything, love is stronger than death, love fears nothing.

**Love of Others:** St Paul writes "You shall love your neighbor as Yourself" (Galatians 5:14). Only if you know how to love yourself, will I entrust your neighbor to you to be loved. If you do not yet know how to love yourself. I am afraid you are only too likely to cheat your neighbor of love as you are cheating yourself. If you love living an immoral life, you do not love yourself. If you hate your soul by loving only your flesh, both will rise together at the end of time but only to be tormented.... **St Augustine**

**Values Worth Dying For:** "Believe that it is the worst crime to prefer your physical life to reverence and to destroy, for the sake of living, the reasons for living". This means that there are values worth dying for, because a life purchased at the cost of betraying these values is based on the betrayal of the reasons for living and is therefore a life destroyed from within. We could express what is meant here as follows: where there is no longer anything worth dying for, life is no longer worthwhile; it has lost its point. And this is not only true for individuals; a land, too, a common culture, has values that justify the commitment of one's life; if such values no longer exist, we also lose the reasons and the forces that maintain social cohesion and preserve a country as a community of life. Man needs transcendence. Immanence alone is too narrow for him. He is created for more. The denial of an afterlife led initially to a passionate glorification of life, the assertion of life at any price. Man needs morality in order to be himself. But morality requires faith in creation and immortality that is he needs the objectivity of obligation, responsibility, and fulfillment... **Pope Benedict XVI**

**To be able to do something beautiful for God, we need Jesus. Each one of us needs to encounter Jesus. Without him we can do nothing. Jesus must be brought to every man and woman. Jesus is the only answer... Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

**In His Will is Our Peace**

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